









EXTRACT
FROM THE
MINUTES
OF THE
YEARLY MEETING
OF
FRIENDS,
HELD AT LOMBARD STREET,
IN THE
CITY OF BALTIMORE,
1849.

BALTIMORE:
PRINTED BY WM. WOODY & SON,
Corner of Market and Calvert sts.

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At a Yearly Meeting of Friends

HELD AT LOMBARD STREET,

In the City of Baltimore, from the 29th of the 10th mo. to the 1st of the 11th mo. 1849, the following Report was received from the Committee appointed to extend assistance to the Seneca tribe of Indians in the State of New York.

Since the Report of the Committee on Indian Concerns to the last Yearly Meeting, the Indians at Cattaraugus, under the care of Friends, have continued steadily to improve in the management of their Farms, and in their domestic comforts, as well as habits of industry and intelligence; and our Superintendent states, that with moderate labour, they may hereafter live very comfortably.

It is, however, with regret the Committee have seen, that the dissensions which existed among the Senecas ever since the negotiation of the fraudulent Treaty of 1838, have not subsided. It will be recollected that by the terms of that Treaty, certain of their Chiefs, had alienated and conveyed all the Lands of the Nation in the State of New York, to the Agents of a Land-jobbing Company; and although by the exertions of their friends, a considerable part of these lands was restored to them, the recollection of the venal and corrupt means by which the Treaty had been effected, produced an unextinguishable jealousy between the people and the Chiefs implicated in that transaction. This continued to increase until the latter part of the last year, when a General Meeting of the male population was convened at Cattaraugus, for the purpose of taking into consideration the state of their National Affairs; and the result was a determination to reform their entire political system.

Accordingly on the 4th of the 12th month, 1848, they organized themselves into a General Conven-

tion of the Nation, and with great unanimity abolished their old form of Government by Chiefs, and adopted a written Constitution, with a Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary Departments, the officers to be chosen by the people, and the elective franchise to be extended to every male Citizen of their Republic over 21 years of age. And notwithstanding that there has been and still is, a systematic opposition to this Government on the part of the Ex-Chiefs, who, under the new order of things, find themselves deprived of the arbitrary power they long had exercised and often abused. We are informed by our Superintendent, that so far, the authority delegated under their new Constitution, had been judiciously administered, and that there is a fair prospect the change in their Government will prove of advantage to the Nation, by securing equal rights to the people: and at the same time, by calling into action their intellectual powers, their intelligence will be increased, and their civilization accelerated. Our Superintendent further remarks, that already there are in the Legislative council, some judicious men of liberal and enlarged views, who understand their position, and appear disposed to devote their time, and if necessary, to sacrifice their individual interests to the public good.

The Constitutional Government thus established, has been recognized by the Government of the United States, and by the authorities of the State of New York, within the Territorial jurisdiction of which State, the Lands of those Indians lie; and the Officers elected and appointed under it, have also been acknowledged by both these Powers, as the Legitimate Representatives and Agents of the Seneca Nation. By this Constitution, thus formally acknowledged, it is provided, that "no treaty shall hereafter be binding upon the Nation, until the same shall have been *submitted to the people*, and be approved by three-

fourths of all the legal voters, and by *three-fourths of all the mothers of the Nation.*" This provision it is believed, will hereafter effectually guarantee to these often deceived and greatly wronged people, the entire security of their lands.

Thus we now see the Seneca Nation with a regular Constitutional Government "calculated" to use their own language "to answer the purposes for which all government should be created." We also find their women mostly withdrawn from the field, and occupying their proper station in their families, and their children suitably cared for at home; and receiving at schools established among themselves, the benefit of literary and scientific learning.

It is under these circumstances the Joint Committee came to the conclusion, that the female manual labour school at Cattaraugus, heretofore under the care of Friends, might now be closed, and accordingly by an arrangement between our Agent and the Seneca Government, it was decided that it would be discontinued on the first of the present month, and the land and premises that had been appropriated for its accommodation, were surrendered to the authorities of the Nation.

In concluding this arrangement, our Agent under instructions from the Committee, assured the Indians, that this measure did not result from any abatement of our friendship for them, but from the difficulty we found in obtaining the services of a suitable friend, and his family hereafter, to superintend and take charge of the establishment, and from the further consideration, that they themselves now have in successful operation, upon their Reservations, a sufficient number of Schools, exclusive of ours, to give them an opportunity of securing an education to all their children.

Upon this decision being announced to the National Council, a Committee was appointed to consider of, and report to a future sitting, what in their

judgment, would be a proper disposition of the improvements now proposed to be relinquished. This Committee after deliberation reported, they had agreed to propose, that it should hereafter be occupied as an orphan asylum. Their Report being favourably received, was, upon full consideration, unanimously approved, and the following proceedings thereon have been forwarded to us:

"CATTARAUGUS RESERVATION, Sept. 5, 1849.

IN GENERAL COUNCIL.

"Whereas the Society of Friends, by their agent, Joseph S. Walton, has surrendered the premises and buildings, known as the school farm on the Cattaraugus Reservation, lately occupied by the said Society, for the support of a female manual labour school, to the Seneca Nation,—therefore,

"*Resolved*, That in consideration of the said surrender, and as a monument of the gratitude of this nation to the Society of Friends, for their untiring efforts to aid us, the said SCHOOL FARM buildings and every thing thereto belonging, and the rents, issues and profits thereof be, and the same are hereby set apart and appropriated to the support and maintenance of a MANUAL LABOUR SCHOOL FOR THE ORPHAN CHILDREN OF THE SENECA NATION OF INDIANS, and that the said premises shall be hereafter known and described as the ORPHAN'S HOME."

The property, which has been improved and occupied by the Society of Friends, may therefore be considered as specifically appropriated and pledged to that object, and thus we may hope, an asylum will hereafter be secured for the destitute children of the Senecas: while this act of humanity on the part of that Government, affords a gratifying

evidence of the moral and social improvement of the Seneca people, and exhibits a striking contrast to their depressed and stolid condition ten years ago, when they were taken under the care of our Yearly Meetings.

In order to secure a permanent support to the Institution, it was further decided, that when the funds due the Nation from the United States, on account of the defalcation of a former agent, would be received, the amount should be invested as a National fund, one half of the income whereof, to be applied to this object; this, with the proceeds of the farm, which has now become very productive, and the amount of the annuities respectively due to each individual of the inmates in the asylum, it was estimated, would be sufficient to meet its expenditures. In the meantime a Committee was appointed to act as Trustees to hold the property until a suitable family could be placed in charge of it.

Since the completion of these arrangements an interesting communication has been received from the Legislative Council of the Seneca Nation, addressed to the Joint Committee of Friends on Indian Concerns in reply to the notice transmitted to them, that we had come to the conclusion to close the female manual labour school at Cattaraugus, and to surrender back the houses and farm occupied for that purpose. As an expression of the feelings of those Indians on the occasion, this document will be interesting to our Friends who have been engaged in this service, and we now submit it to the meeting:

To the Committee of the Four Yearly Meetings of Friends on Indian Concerns of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Genesee, and through them to the Society they represent.

BROTHERS:

Your communications of the 25th of January, 1849, and that of the seventh day of September inst. made to the Council of our Nation on the same day, by your

agent and superintendant, Joseph S. Walton, have been duly considered. In the former, you advised us of your conviction, that the time was approaching when you might properly close your joint labors among us, as Committees of the four Yearly Meetings of Genesee, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, and in which you say you deemed it a proper occasion, to state some of the reasons which had brought you to this conclusion, and also to express your continued and ardent wishes for our future welfare.

The communication made to the Council of our Nation on the aforesaid seventh day of Sept. inst. informed us of the fact, that the period for the termination of your joint labors had now arrived: we were also informed that the premises occupied by you, would be surrendered to the existing Government of the Seneca Nation of Indians at a proper time.

Brothers,—

It is with much pain and sorrow we learn that you are to close your labors among us. When we turn our faces backward, and look over the histories of the past, we find that more than fifty winters have gone by, since the Iroquois, or "The Six Nations of Indians," first selected the *Ho di wi yus doh*, [the Society of Friends,] as *their friends* upon whom they could repose confidence, without fear of being betrayed.

The selection was made from the sects and denominations of those who styled themselves Christians, at the time when war had diminished the numbers of the Iroquois braves,—when the Iroquois' bow-string had broken,—when his council fires were nearly put out by the blood of his people, and the loud thundering voices of the big iron guns of the pale faces, caused the ground to tremble beneath his feet, and his Council House to shake to its very foundation,—when oppression crushed the Iroquois, and cruelty made his heart bleed,—when murder and robbery committed upon the red man, brought bounty to the spoiler

committing the foul deed,—when the pale faces, like hungry hounds, chased the red man from his hunting grounds.

It was then that the red man's sun was darkened, and the Great Spirit had drawn his sable garment before its shining face, and left his red children to roam in gloom and uncertainty.—In looking around, the Iroquois saw none to assist him in his struggles for his liberty—his country, and his firesides,—he found no sympathy from the pale faced Christian, save from the Society of Friends, who, with the true principle of the spirit of Christianity implanted in their breasts, guided by the dictation of the Good Spirit, and following the counsel and mandates of HIM WHO NEVER ERRS, came to our relief: not with powder, bullets or arms, but with sympathy in their bosoms, pity in their hearts, and friendship in their hands.

Our friendless forefathers now felt inspired with the hope that the Great Spirit had not abandoned us altogether, and having learned that the Friends sought to promote the welfare and best interests of our people, readily entered into an alliance of peace and friendship with them; and our tradition informs us, that since the time this alliance was established between the Society of Friends and our people, nothing has occurred to mar our mutual good understanding, or tarnish the chain of friendship that bound us together.

The Society of Friends were early impressed with the conviction, that in order to prepare our people to resist the assaults of our *civilized* white neighbors, they must be taught and made to understand the habits of civilized life. These Friends, therefore, at an early day introduced agriculture and the arts, and sciences among us, and provided competent persons to instruct us in them, while by their counsel, advice and example, they enlightened, encouraged and assisted us in our progress towards civilization.

(At this stage of our review, it may be proper to state, that subsequently, other religious Societies took a deep interest in the welfare of our people, and have sent Missionaries amongst us, the latter directing their efforts to our improvements in letters, and more particularly to our spiritual welfare.)

Brothers,—

As time rolled on, and generation followed generation, we have been slowly, yet steadily advancing in the habits of civilization. Our warriors gradually left the chase and followed the plow,—our aged men and women put off the garments made of their own manufacture and attired themselves in muslin, broad-cloth and the variegated calico—the manufacture of our industrious and prosperous white neighbors. As the great improvements made by our people went forward, the war hatchet was buried, the tree of peace was planted,—the silver chain of friendship that bound our people with the children of the immortal Washington, continued untarnished, and the guarantee of the U. S. Government for a peaceful and quiet possession of our lands by solemn treaties was given; yet a peculiar antipathy still existed towards our people, and the avarice of the pale face still pursued our nation, until the winter of 1837 or '38, when "it prevailed,"—thus the prediction of a dying chief,* many winters before, was literally fulfilled. Our lands *were taken from us* by the arts and schemes of rapacious white men, assisted by a few wicked Chiefs of our own Nation, whom they had corrupted and seduced to betray their people, and sell the inheritance of their Nation.

Brothers,—

You all know the true history of their wicked proceedings. You have recorded them in the page of history; it will, therefore, be unnecessary for us to

* (Red Jacket.) Vide Stone's Life, p. 391.

repeat them here, inasmuch as the narration of the events that transpired at the time alluded to, never fails to renew our sorrow and pangs,—to open afresh our wounded feelings, and to cause the stoic son of the forest, to weep for his race and his country.

Brothers.—

When our nation were friendless and in distress; and seemed doomed to destruction, an appeal was made to you for aid. You immediately informed yourselves of our condition, and interested yourselves with the authorities at the city of Washington on our behalf. Months and years passed without success, still you remained our firm and unwavering friends. In the year 1842 you at length succeeded in procuring the return of two of our Reservations containing more than 53,000 acres of land, by which our people were saved from the horrors and destruction that would have followed their compulsory removal, and which did befall such of them as emigrated. When we think of the inevitable and certain destruction that awaited us, and especially of the bitter experience of the 213 emigrants of 1846, we tremble; and offer our gratitude to the Great Spirit for providing us, in you, a friend, and for his goodness in opening a way, by which you were enabled to rescue us.

You have stood by us on all occasions of danger and trouble, and by bringing our wrongs to public notice, by publications, you awakened the popular sympathies in our favour, and rolled back the tide of prejudice and oppression which was threatening the destruction of our race.—By these measures the people of the State of New York have been awakened to a sense of justice towards us, and have opened their coffers, and furnished the means, for the erection of school houses and the support of competent school teachers among us: and they have likewise passed legislative enactments in order the more effectually to *protect* our rights, and *preserve* our race. Our

females have also received valuable instructions from you, regarding their domestic duties and employments, by which increased comforts have been introduced into our families, and the foundation laid for our more rapid improvements in the habits of civilized life, while the advice and counsel received from the men and women friends in relation to our social and domestic affairs and employments, as well as in regard to withdrawing of our females from field labor, and occupying themselves in the more appropriate duties of their household affairs, has not been without its beneficial influence in raising our standard in the scale of civilization, from which our people can never retrograde. The plume, the waumpum, the paint, the eagle's claw, and all the other peculiarities of savage costume,—once laid aside from the Indian toilet, being the effect of civilization, can never be reinstated.

Brothers,—

Many of the aged among you, must recollect our condition at the time you first commenced your labors amongst us, and by comparing our then condition, with our present improved state, it must be evident to you that your labors have not been in vain. From the precarious mode of subsisting by the chase, we have become agriculturalists,—our wigwams have been exchanged for fine frame and substantial log houses,—and by the diffusion of knowledge and education among our people, we have become intelligent and enlightened, so that we can clearly see our rights and understand them. Our improvement has not been limited to social relations only, but an important change has taken place in our political affairs. Instead of the aristocratic and irresponsible government by Chiefs, we have now a constitutional government, based upon republican and democratic principles.

Brothers,—

It is with shame and sorrow that we acknowledge; there are some persons among our people, who are disposed to censure the Society of Friends, because they refused to interfere in the late political controversy among our people. We wish you to understand that the leaders of the party, who are accusing *you* are the very men who, a few years since, sold every inch of land that belonged to our nation. They have not the confidence of the nation, and are, therefore, without influence among the masses generally. They are the enemies of our nation. We utterly denounce and condemn their actions and proceedings toward Friends.

Brothers,—

We have now briefly enumerated a few of the acts of kindness, and some of the important services you have rendered our people, and it is with much pain and sorrow, we learn you are about to close your labors among us. We have, as associates, passed through many dangers, and severe trials and hardships.—In all these you have ever stood by us and been our support,—have counselled us in our troubles,—consoled us in our misfortunes,—strengthened us when feeble, and often relieved our necessities:—all—all of these kind offices have endeared you to us.—To part, are words too severe for our ears.

Brothers,—

Your labors among us are now about to be discontinued, but you have assured us that you are still our friends, and willing to assist us whenever it shall become necessary,—that you will continue to feel an ardent desire for our future welfare, and extend your fostering care over our people,—finally, that you have not abandoned us to become a prey to our heartless enemies, the land speculators.

Brothers,—

We hope that you may teach your children to love and pity the red man, so that when the Master of Life

and Light shall call you hence, your red brothers may still have friends like you, and the good understanding now existing between us, be forever perpetuated and cherished between your posterity and ours.

Brothers,—

The council of our Nation have, under our new form of government, determined, as a monument of our gratitude for your labours among us, that the school-house and farm occupied by you, shall be converted into an asylum to be called the "Orphan's House," wherein the orphans and poor children of our nation may henceforth find a home, and be instructed in the arts of civilized life. It shall be continued under the charge and supervision of the Legislative Council, which will take measures to provide for its maintenance and support.

Brothers,—

For the services you have rendered us, accept the gratitude, of an injured and oppressed race. We earnestly invoke the blessings of the Great Spirit upon you, and ask him to extend his protecting care over your friends, who are now here with us, and that whenever they depart from among us, he will conduct them safely home, to join you once more.

Brothers,—

Farewell.

Signed on behalf of the Committee of the Council of the Seneca Nation of Indians:

PETER WILSON.
JOHN LUKE.
JOHN SNYDER.
LITTLE JOE.

(Attested)

WM. JEMERSON, } Clerk of the
Seneca Nation
of Indians.

While the Committee, under existing circumstances, deemed it proper, as here stated, to close the female manual labour school, and to leave the charge of educating the children of the Indians to themselves, it is our united judgment, that the time has not yet arrived, when it will be right for Friends wholly to dissolve their connexion with these people, and withdraw altogether from them. Though greatly advanced in intelligence, and perhaps comparatively enjoying as much domestic comfort as many of the neighboring white population around them, they still have crafty and designing enemies, who, there is abundant evidence, have abated nothing of their desire to effect the removal of these Indians from the valuable Territory they now occupy; indeed, there is little doubt, but that by the intrigues of emissaries, who continue to hover round these Indians, a new emigration party is already forming, in which some of the same persons that were implicated in the disastrous emigration of 1846, are active agents. It is, therefore, the opinion of the Committee, that these people, who still look to Friends as their only safe and abiding reliance in times of difficulty, will yet continue to need our care.

The Committee have lately received a communication from the Tuscarora Indians, a Tribe residing near to the Falls of Niagara, requesting that Friends would take charge of a school upon their Reservation; we believe the number of those Indians is about 300 individuals. In their application they say they have a farm of about 70 acres under pretty good cultivation—a living spring upon it, and that there is a frame house 22 \times 24 or 25 feet, which may be purchased from an individual who owns it for \$50. They add, "This land is now applied to the benefit of the children whilst at the school; our object is, that our children be instructed in the elementary branches of

useful education,—industry and morality. Finally, in all that is necessary to the easy transaction of business. And from what we have seen and know of the Friends, we would prefer that the school be under their guidance and control, or of whomsoever they may think proper to appoint." This appeal has been forwarded for the consideration of our friends in New York.

Our brethren of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, who were heretofore united with us, having withdrawn from this concern, the service has devolved upon the Committees of Genesee, New York and Baltimore Yearly Meetings.

Signed in behalf of the Committee.

SAMUEL TOWNSEND.
CATHARINE M. SMITH.

10th mo. 22, 1849.









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